WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method comprising:

receiving an indication to dynamically integrate a component into an executing application;

loading the component; and

linking the component to the application by:

obtaining the component's integration interface, the integration interface comprising methods for managing the component; and

invoking an initialize method of the integration interface.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the component is a new component that replaces an existing component, and the method additionally comprises invoking a replace method of the integration interface, the replace method to transition an existing state of the existing component into the new component.

3. The method of claim 1, additionally comprising supporting the component's ability to allow other components to communicate with it by:

invoking a publish method of the integration interface and specifying one or more interfaces to publish to other components; and

storing the one or more interfaces in an interface clearinghouse.

4. The method of claim 3, additionally comprising supporting the component's ability to communicate with other components by:

consulting the interface clearinghouse to determine one or more interfaces to retrieve from other component;

invoking a retrieve method of the integration interface and specifying an interface of the one or more interfaces to retrieve from other component; and

using the retrieved interface to communicate with other components.

5. The method of claim 1, additionally comprising invoking a stop method of the integration interface when the component is ready to be shut down.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the application is in a network, and said loading the component comprises retrieving the component from a member in the network.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the member comprises a peer.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the peer comprises another component loader in the network.

9. The method of claim 6, wherein the member comprises a host in the network.

10. An apparatus comprising:

a component loader to load requested components of a plurality of

components into an application, the plurality of components corresponding to an application, and each implementing an integration interface having a number of methods for managing loaded components;

an interface clearinghouse to store and manage interfaces corresponding to the loaded components; and

a messaging mechanism for external entities to communicate with the loaded components.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the integration interface comprises:

an initialize method to transition a given component into a state to operate; and

a stop method to transition the given component into a destroy state.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, additionally comprising a replace state to replace an old component with a new component by transitioning an existing state of the old component to the new component.

13. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the application is in a network, and said loading the component comprises retrieving the component from a member in the network.

14. A system comprising:

an integration interface having a plurality of methods for managing a

component;

at least one component that implements the integration interface;

a components repository for storing the at least one component;

a component framework corresponding to an application to manage the at least one component using the integration interface, the component framework having:

a component loader to load requested components from the components repository into an application;

an interface clearinghouse to store and manage interfaces corresponding to the loaded components; and

a messaging mechanism for external entities to communicate with the loaded components.

15. The system of claim 14, additionally comprising a communication bus for inter-components communication.

16. The system of claim 14, wherein the communication bus is established after at least one call to a publish method and a retrieve method of the integration interface.

17. The system of claim 14, wherein the application is in a network, and said loading the component comprises retrieving the component from a member in the network.

18. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

receive an indication to dynamically integrate a component into an executing application;

load the component; and

link the component to the application by:

obtaining the component's integration interface, the integration interface comprising methods for managing the component; and

invoking an initialize method of the integration interface.

19. The machine-readable medium of claim 18, wherein the component is a new component and the instructions cause the processor to replace an existing component by invoking a replace method of the integration interface, the replace method to transition an existing state of the existing component into the new component.

20. The machine-readable medium of claim 18, the instructions causing the processor to additionally support the component's ability to allow other components to communicate with it by:

invoking a publish method of the integration interface and specifying one

or more interfaces to publish to other components; and

storing the one or more interfaces in an interface clearinghouse.

21. The machine-readable medium of claim 20, the instructions causing the processor to additionally support the component's ability to communicate with other components by:

consulting the interface clearinghouse to determine one or more interfaces to retrieve from other component;

invoking a retrieve method of the integration interface and specifying an interface of the one or more interfaces to retrieve from other component; and

using the retrieved interface to communicate with other components.

22. The machine-readable medium of claim 18, wherein the application is in a network, and said loading the component comprises retrieving the component from a member in the network.

23. An apparatus comprising:

at least one processor; and

a machine-readable medium having instructions encoded thereon, which when executed by the processor, are capable of directing the processor to:

receive an indication to dynamically integrate a component into an

executing application;

load the component; and

link the component to the application by:

obtaining the component's integration interface, the integration interface comprising methods for managing the component; and

invoking an initialize method of the integration interface.

24. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the component is a new component and the instructions cause the processor to replace an existing component by invoking a replace method of the integration interface, the replace method to transition an existing state of the existing component into the new component.

25. The apparatus of claim 23, the instructions causing the processor to additionally support the component's ability to allow other components to communicate with it by:

invoking a publish method of the integration interface and specifying one or more interfaces to publish to other components; and

storing the one or more interfaces in an interface clearinghouse.

26. The apparatus of claim 25, the instructions causing the processor to additionally support the component's ability to communicate with other

components by:

consulting the interface clearinghouse to determine one or more interfaces to retrieve from other component;

invoking a retrieve method of the integration interface and specifying an interface of the one or more interfaces to retrieve from other component; and

using the retrieved interface to communicate with other components.

27. An apparatus comprising:

means for loading requested components of a plurality of components into an application, the plurality of components corresponding to an application, and each implementing an integration interface having a number of methods for managing loaded components;

means for storing and managing interfaces corresponding to the loaded components; and

means for external entities to communicate with the loaded components.

28. The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the integration interface comprises:

means for transitioning a given component into a state to operate; and

means for transitioning the given component into a destroy state.

29. The apparatus of claim 27, additionally comprising means for replacing an

old component with a new component by transitioning an existing state of the old component to the new component.

30. The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the application is in a network, and said means for loading the component comprises means for retrieving the component from a member in the network.